

Supervisor may require special measures to protect the rights of the lessor and objecting offset lessees.

(c) The lessee shall drill and produce the wells the Regional Supervisor determines are necessary to protect the lessor from loss by reason of production on other properties or in lieu thereof, with the approval of the Regional Supervisor, pay a sum determined by the Regional Supervisor as adequate to compensate the lessor for the lessee's failure to drill and produce any well. Payment of that sum shall be considered as the equivalent of production in paying quantities for the purpose of extending the lease term.

[53 FR 10690, Apr. 1, 1988, as amended at 55 FR 47752, Nov. 15, 1990; 56 FR 32099, July 15, 1991. Redesignated at 63 FR 29749, May 29, 1998]

§ 250.203 Exploration Plan.

(a) The lessee shall submit for approval an Exploration Plan which includes the following:

(1) The proposed type and sequence of exploration activities to be undertaken together with a timetable for their performance from commencement to completion.

(2) A description of the type of mobile drilling unit, platform, or artificial island to be used including a discussion of the drilling program and important safety and pollution-prevention features. In the Alaska OCS Region, lessees shall include provisions for—

(i) Drilling a relief well should a blowout occur,

(ii) Loss or disablement of a drilling unit, and

(iii) Loss or damage to support craft.

(3) A table indicating the approximate location of each proposed exploratory well, including surface locations, proposed well depths, and water depth at well sites.

(b) The lessee shall submit the following supporting information to accompany the Exploration Plan:

(1) Data and information described below which the Regional Supervisor deems necessary to evaluate geologic conditions:

(i) Current structure contour maps drawn to the top of each prospective hydrocarbon accumulation showing the

approximate surface and bottomhole location of each proposed well.

(ii) Full-scale interpreted, and if appropriate, migrated Common Depth Point seismic lines intersecting at or near the primary well locations.

(iii) A time versus depth chart based on the appropriate velocity analysis in the area of interpretation.

(iv) Interpreted structure sections corresponding to each seismic line submitted in paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section showing the location and proposed depth of each well.

(v) A generalized stratigraphic column from the surface to total depth.

(vi) A description of the geology of the prospect.

(vii) A plat showing exploration seismic coverage of the lease.

(viii) A bathymetry map showing surface locations of proposed wells.

(ix) An analysis of seafloor and subsurface geologic and manmade hazards. Unless the lessee can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Regional Supervisor that data sufficient to determine the presence or absence of such conditions are available, the lessee shall conduct a shallow hazards survey in accordance with the Regional Supervisor's specifications. The Regional Supervisor may require the submission of a shallow hazards report and the data upon which the analysis is based.

(2) An oil-spill response plan as described in part 254 or reference to an approved Regional Response Plan.

(3) A discussion of the measures that have been or will be taken to satisfy the conditions of lease stipulations.

(4) A list of the proposed drilling fluids, including components and their chemical compositions, information on the projected amounts and rates of drilling fluid and cuttings discharges, and method of disposal.

(5) Information concerning the presence of hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) and the following proposed precautionary measures:

(i) A classification of the lease area as to whether it is within an area known to contain H₂S, an area where the presence of H₂S is unknown, or an area where the absence of H₂S has been confirmed as described in § 250.417 of this part and the documentation supporting the classification; and

(ii) If the classification is an area known to contain H_2S or an area where the presence of H_2S is unknown, an H_2S Contingency Plan as required in § 250.417 of this part.

(6) A detailed discussion of new or unusual technology to be employed. The lessee shall indicate which portions of the supporting information the lessee believes are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552) and the implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2). The lessee shall include a written discussion of the general subject matter of the deleted portions for transmittal to the recipients of plan copies.

(7) A brief description of the onshore facilities to be used to support the exploration activities including information as to whether the facilities are existing, proposed, or are to be expanded; a brief description of support vessels to be used and information concerning their frequency of travel; and a map showing the lease relative to the shoreline and depicting proposed transportation routes.

(8) For onshore support facilities, except in the western GOM, indicate the following:

(i) The location, size, number, and land requirements (including rights-of-way and easements) of the onshore support and storage facilities and, where possible, a timetable for the acquisition of lands and the construction or expansion of any facilities.

(ii) The estimated number of persons expected to be employed in support of offshore, onshore, and transportation activities and, where possible, the approximate number of new employees and families likely to move into the affected area.

(iii) Major supplies, services, energy, water, or other resources within affected States necessary for carrying out the related plan.

(iv) The source, composition, frequency, and duration of emissions of air pollutants.

(9) The quantity, composition, and method of disposal of solid and liquid wastes and pollutants likely to be generated by offshore, onshore, and transportation operations.

(10) Historic weather patterns and other meteorological conditions of off-

shore areas including temperature, sky cover and visibility, precipitation, storm frequency and magnitude, wind direction and velocity, and freezing and icing conditions listing, where possible, the means and extremes of each.

(11) Physical oceanography including onsite direction and velocity of currents and tides, sea states, temperature, and salinity, water quality, and icing conditions, where appropriate.

(12) Onsite flora and fauna including both pelagic and benthic communities, transitory birds and mammals that may breed or migrate through the area when proposed activities are being conducted, identification of endangered and threatened species and their critical habitats that could be affected by proposed activities, and typical fishing seasons and locations of fishing activities. The results of any biological surveys required by the Regional Supervisor (including a copy of survey reports or references to previously submitted reports) should be incorporated into this discussion.

(13) Environmentally sensitive areas (onshore as well as offshore), e.g., refuges, preserves, sanctuaries, rookeries, calving grounds, and areas of particular concern identified by an affected State pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) which may be affected by the proposed activities.

(14) Onsite uses of the area based on information available, e.g., shipping, military use, recreation, boating, commercial fishing, subsistence hunting and fishing, and other mineral exploration in the area.

(15) If the Regional Director believes that an archaeological resource may exist in the lease area, the Regional Director will notify the lessee in writing. Prior to commencing any operations, the lessee shall prepare a report, as specified by the Regional Director, to determine the potential existence of any archaeological resource that may be affected by operations. The report shall be prepared by an archaeologist and geophysicist and shall be based on an assessment of data from remote-sensing surveys and of other pertinent archaeological and environmental information.

(16) Existing and planned monitoring systems that are measuring or will measure environmental conditions and provide data and information on the impacts of activities in the geographic areas.

(17) An assessment of the direct and cumulative effects on the offshore and onshore environments expected to occur as a result of implementation of the Exploration Plan, expressed in terms of magnitude and duration, with special emphasis upon the identification and evaluation of unavoidable and irreversible impacts on the environment. Measures to minimize or mitigate impacts should be identified and discussed.

(18) Certificate(s) of coastal zone consistency as provided in 15 CFR part 930.

(19) For each OCS facility, the lessee shall submit the information described below when it is needed to make the findings under § 250.303 or § 250.304 of this part:

(i)(A) Projected emissions from each proposed or modified facility for each year of operation and the basis for all calculations to include (if the drilling unit has not yet been determined, the lessee shall use worst-case estimates for the type of unit proposed):

(1) For each source, the amount of the emission by air pollutant expressed in tons per year and the frequency and duration of emissions.

(2) For each facility, the total amount of emissions by air pollutant expressed in tons per year and, in addition for a modified facility only, the incremental amount of total emissions by air pollutant resulting from the new or modified source(s).

(3) A detailed description of all processes, processing equipment, and storage units, including information on fuels to be burned.

(4) A schematic drawing which identifies the location and elevation of each source.

(5) If projected emissions are based on the use of emission-reduction control technology, a description of the controls providing the information required by paragraph (b)(19)(iv) of this section.

(B) The distance of each proposed facility from the mean high water mark

(mean higher high water mark on the Pacific coast) of any State.

(ii)(A) The model(s) used to determine the effect on the onshore air quality of emissions from each facility, or from other facilities when required by the Regional Supervisor, and the results obtained through the use of the model(s). Only model(s) that has been approved by the Director may be used.

(B) The best available meteorological information and data consistent with the model(s) used stating the basis for the data and information selected.

(iii) The air quality status of any onshore area where the air quality is significantly affected (within the meaning of § 250.303 of this part) by projected emissions from each facility proposed in the plan. The area should be classified as nonattainment, attainment, or unclassifiable to include the status of each area by air pollutant, the class of attainment area, and the air-pollution control agency whose jurisdiction covers the area identified.

(iv) The emission-reduction controls available to reduce emissions, including the source, the emission-reduction control technology, reductions to be achieved, and monitoring system the lessee proposes to use to measure emissions. The lessee shall indicate which emission-reduction control technology the lessee believes constitutes the best available control technology and the basis for that opinion.

(20) The name, address, and telephone number of an individual employee of the lessee to whom inquiries by the Regional Supervisor and the affected State(s) may be made.

(21) Such other information and data as the Regional Supervisor may require.

(c) Information and data discussed in other documents previously submitted to MMS or otherwise readily available to reviewers may be referenced. The material being referenced shall be cited, described briefly, and include a statement of where the material is available for inspection. Any material based on proprietary data which is not itself available for inspection shall not be so referenced.

(d) The Regional Director, after consultation with the Governor of the affected State(s) or the Governor's designated representative, the CZM agency of affected State(s), and the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) may limit the amount of information required to be included to that necessary to assure conformance with the Act, other laws, applicable regulations, and lease provisions.

(e) The Regional Supervisor shall determine within 10 working days after receipt of the Exploration Plan whether additional information is needed. If no deficiencies are identified and the required number of copies have been received, the plan will be deemed submitted.

(f) Within 2 working days after the date an Exploration Plan has been deemed submitted, the Regional Supervisor shall transmit by receipted mail a copy of the plan, except for those portions determined to be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA and the implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2), to the Governor or the Governor's designated representative and the CZM agency of each affected State. Receipt of the plan by the CZM agency initiates the State coastal zone consistency review period.

(g) In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Regional Supervisor shall evaluate the environmental impacts of the activities described in the Exploration Plan.

(h) In the evaluation of an Exploration Plan, the Regional Supervisor shall consider written comments from the Governor of an affected State or the Governor's designated representative which are received prior to the deadline specified by the Regional Supervisor. The Regional Supervisor may consult directly with affected States regarding matters contained in the comments.

(i) Within 30 days of submission of a proposed Exploration Plan, the Regional Supervisor shall accomplish one of the following:

(1) Approve the plan;

(2) Require the lessee to modify any plan which is inconsistent with the provisions of the lease, the Act, or the

regulations prescribed under the Act including air quality, environmental, safety, and health requirements; or

(3) Disapprove the plan if the Regional Supervisor determines that a proposed activity would probably cause serious harm or damage to life (including fish and other aquatic life), property, natural resources offshore including any mineral deposits (in areas leased or not leased), the national security or defense, or the marine, coastal, or human environment, and that the proposed activity cannot be modified to avoid the condition(s).

(j) The Regional Supervisor shall notify the lessee in writing of the reason(s) for disapproving an Exploration Plan or for requiring modification of a plan. For plans requiring modification, the Regional Supervisor shall also notify the lessee in writing of the conditions that must be met for plan approval.

(k)(1) The lessee may resubmit an Exploration Plan, as modified, to the Regional Supervisor in the same manner as for a new plan. Only information related to the proposed modifications need be submitted. The Regional Supervisor shall approve, disapprove, or require modification of the resubmitted plan based upon the criteria in paragraph (i) of this section within 30 days of the resubmission date.

(2) An Exploration Plan which has been disapproved pursuant to paragraph (i)(3) of this section may be resubmitted if there is a change in the conditions which caused it to be disapproved. The Regional Supervisor shall approve, require modification, or disapprove such a plan within 30 days of the resubmission date.

(l) When a State objects to a lessee's coastal zone consistency certification, the lessee shall modify the plan to accommodate the State's objection(s) and resubmit the plan to—

(1) The Regional Supervisor for review pursuant to the criteria in paragraphs (h), (i), and (j) of this section; and

(2) Through the Regional Supervisor to the State for review pursuant to the CZMA and the implementing regulations (15 CFR 930.83 and 930.84).

Alternatively, the lessee may appeal the State's objection to the Secretary

of Commerce pursuant to the procedures described in section 307 of the CZMA and the implementing regulations (subpart H of 15 CFR part 930). The Regional Supervisor shall approve or disapprove a plan as resubmitted within 30 days of the resubmission date.

(m) If the Regional Supervisor disapproves an Exploration Plan, the Secretary may, subject to the provisions of section 5(a)(2)(B) of the Act and the implementing regulations in §250.112 and 256.77 of this chapter II, cancel the lease(s), and the lessee shall be entitled to compensation in accordance with section 5(a)(2)(c) of the Act.

(n)(1) The Regional Supervisor shall periodically review the activities being conducted under an approved Exploration Plan and may request updated information on schedules and procedures. The frequency and extent of the Regional Supervisor's review shall be based upon the significance of any changes in available information and in other onshore or offshore conditions affecting or affected by exploration activities being conducted pursuant to the plan. If the review indicates that the plan should be revised to meet the requirements of this part, the Regional Supervisor shall require the needed revision.

(2) Revisions to an approved or pending Exploration Plan, whether initiated by the lessee or ordered by the Regional Supervisor, shall be submitted to the Regional Supervisor for approval. Only information related to the proposed revisions need be submitted. When the Regional Supervisor determines that a proposed revision could result in a significant change in the impacts previously identified and evaluated or requires additional permits, the revisions shall be subject to all of the procedures in this section.

(o) To ensure safety and protection of the environment and archaeological resources, the Regional Director may authorize or direct the lessee to conduct geological, geophysical, biological, archaeological, or other surveys or monitoring programs. The lessee shall provide the Regional Director, upon request, with copies of any data obtained as a result of those surveys and monitoring programs.

(p) The lessee may not drill any well until the District Supervisor's approval of an Application for Permit to Drill (APD), submitted in accordance with the requirements of §250.414 of this part, has been received. The District Supervisor shall not approve any APD until all affected States with approved CZM programs have concurred or have been conclusively presumed to concur with the applicant's coastal zone consistency certification accompanying a plan, or the Secretary of Commerce has made the finding authorized by section 307(c)(3)(B)(iii) of the CZMA. The APD's must conform to the activities described in detail in the approved Exploration Plan and shall not be subject to a separate State coastal zone consistency review.

(q) Nothing in this section or in an approved plan shall limit the lessee's responsibility to take appropriate measures to meet emergency situations. In such situations, the Regional Supervisor may approve or require departures from an approved Exploration Plan.

[53 FR 10690, Apr. 1, 1988; 53 FR 26067, July 11, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 50616, Dec. 8, 1989; 59 FR 53093, Oct. 21, 1994; 62 FR 13996, Mar. 25, 1997. Redesignated and amended at 63 FR 29479, 29485, May 29, 1998]

§250.204 Development and Production Plan.

(a) The lessee shall submit for approval a Development and Production Plan which includes the following:

(1) A description of and schedule for the development and production activities to be performed including plan commencement date, date of first production, total time to complete all development and production activities, and dates and sequences for drilling wells and installing facilities and equipment.

(2) A description of any drilling vessels, platforms, pipelines, or other facilities and operations located offshore which are proposed or known by the lessee (whether or not owned or operated by the lessee) to be directly related to the proposed development, including the location, size, design, and important safety, pollution prevention, and environmental monitoring features of the facilities and operations.